

Meet Alejandro

STORIES FROM THE adolescent family life program

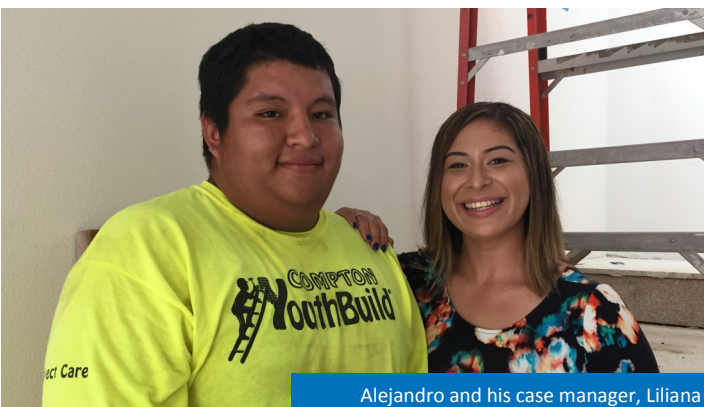
Alejandro's Building Blocks for a Bright Future

Alejandro is comfortable on a construction site. He grew up learning how to build things from his father – his role model – who wanted Alejandro to have the tools—both literally and figuratively—he could use for his future. That foundation in construction has evolved into a passion for Alejandro. Now a young father, Alejandro strives to work hard to establish a livelihood for himself, his girlfriend and their child.

On the brink of fatherhood, Alejandro realized he and his family needed additional support. That's when he was referred to **AltaMed, a local Adolescent Family Life Program (AFLP) agency in Los Angeles County**. He instantly felt comfortable with his case manager Liliana, who provided him the emotional support and life planning skills he needed during this time of transition.

Life planning is a key part of the AFLP Positive Youth Development Model. Life planning is a process that helps individuals plan and develop personal goals based on their strengths, values, resources, and vision for their life. Engaging youth like Alejandro in the life planning process helps to ensure youth have plans in place to maintain progress made during the program and beyond.

Alejandro says fatherhood is everything: "Being there for my children, as a support mentally and financially." Alejandro wasn't afraid to ask for help, to give him and his family the best chance at a bright future. "I know many men who think that they can do everything, but at points we have our weak sides where we need support to talk to someone to keep going on with our life ... and learn how to be a better father."



Alejandro and his case manager, Liliana

Los Angeles County, California



Alejandro on a construction site in Pasadena, California

Liliana says that Alejandro flourished during their sessions—making the most out of the activities they would do together. He understands the concepts of AFLP and brings the program to life. Alejandro has a strong sense of self and Liliana is there to guide him—to help him reach his full potential.

By working side-by-side with Liliana, Alejandro learned how to set both short and long-term goals. He continues to build his vocational skills on construction sites during the day, taking tangible steps to work towards his larger ambitions. When he's not on the job site, he is working at Wal-Mart to meet his family's short-term financial needs.

Alejandro has many strengths. He's funny and he likes taking care of people. But one strength that rises to the top is leadership, which he identified while working with his AFLP case manager Liliana. When his construction supervisor Jonathan is off-site, Alejandro steps in to lead and provide guidance to trainees. Jonathan has nothing but positive things to say about Alejandro. Alejandro's work ethic is well recognized on the construction site.

Alejandro has clear goals for his life. By the end of this year, he plans to be at a private construction company or working for a union in either dry walling, carpentry or electricity. He hopes to learn all kinds of trades so that one day he can build his own house.

Meet the Adolescent Family Life Program

The **Adolescent Family Life Program (AFLP)** is a strengths-based case management program with integrated life planning. The program supports pregnant and parenting youth in building resilience strengths and skills to thrive. Case managers meet one-on-one with youth to establish a caring relationship, identify the youth's needs, and offer support accessing services, setting goals and building skills to manage life's challenges and plan for the future.

PROGRAM GOALS: Improve pregnancy planning and spacing and increase educational and vocational attainment, access to and utilization of needed services, and social and emotional support.

WHO WE SERVE: Expectant and parenting youth up to age 19 who have custody of their child or are co-parenting.

SERVICE DELIVERY: Services are provided by county health departments, hospitals and community-based organizations.



Adolescent Childbearing in California

In 2015, over 24,000 California children were born to mothers aged 15-19.⁴ The California adolescent birth rate (ABR) declined to a record low 17.6 births per 1,000 females aged 15-19 – a 61 percent decline from the 2000 rate. Despite this success, the number of youth, families and communities impacted by early childbearing remains high.

California birth rates vary greatly by race, ethnicity, age, geography and other factors. For example:

- Latinas make up nearly three out of four adolescent births in California.⁴ In 2016-17, 73 percent of youth in AFLP were Latinas.
- The county with the highest adolescent birth rate (ABR) —Del Norte— has a rate 6.4 times greater than the county with the lowest ABR—Marin.⁴

In recognition of the variations in birth rates across the state, CDPH/MCAH developed the [California Adolescent Sexual Health Needs Index \(CASHNI\)](#) to target programs to areas in the state with the greatest need. AFLP operates through 19 local agencies in high need counties across the state.

Data Sources:

1. 2016-17 data from the Adolescent Family Life Program, Maternal, Child and Adolescent Division, California Department of Public Health.
2. Postpartum contraceptive use among adolescent mothers in seven states. *J Adolesc Health*. 2013 Mar;52(3):278-83. doi: 10.1016/j.jadohealth.2012.05.004. Epub 2012 Jun 23.
3. CDC (MMWR) Vital Signs: Repeat Births Among Teens — United States, 2007–2010, April 5, 2013 / 62(13);249-255.
4. Adolescent Births in California, 2000-2015. California Department of Public Health, Center for Family Health, Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Division, Epidemiology, Assessment, and Program Development Branch. November 2017.

AFLP Storytelling—Volume 1.3

A Focus on Positive Youth Development (PYD)

All youth have strengths. All youth benefit from high expectations and supportive relationships. All youth are capable of making meaningful contributions in their lives, families and communities. The AFLP PYD program turns these values into meaningful activities for the youth to explore their strengths, values, resources, needs and vision for their life so that during and after the program they can:

- develop strengths and call on them to navigate life's challenges;
- build healthy and supportive connections with the important people in their lives;
- identify and work toward personal goals that will lead to healthier, happier lives for them and their children.

84% of AFLP participants are in school, graduated or received a diploma¹

Increased use of highly-effective, long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARCs):

- 37% for adolescents receiving AFLP services.¹
- 12%-22% for adolescent mothers nationally.^{2,3}

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